# Gratitude For Gaming

Community NerdyBirdy Nov 24, 2021

In many parts of the world, the end of the year is traditionally a time for reflecting and expressing gratitude for the positive experiences and moments of the last year. Despite the challenges and disruptions of the last two years, we all also have cause for gratitude and giving thanks.

For millions around the world, one bright spot of the last two years has been gaming. It might seem strange at first to say you're grateful for gaming. Video games after all, are considered by some to be another form of entertainment. But for those of us within the Xbox Ambassadors program, we understand that gaming is much more.

## Connection Through Gaming

Gaming fosters community, encourages new relationships and helps us experience moments that would not otherwise be possible through different mediums. During the last two years, gaming helped provide a way for people to safely connect with friends and family in the midst of a devastating global pandemic.

For millions of people, it's not an exaggeration to say that gaming was a crucial social lifeline. In 2020, the National Geographic reported that playing video games was an important and beneficial way for kids to socialize with their friends when strict lockdowns prevented play dates. And the BBC has reported that online gaming can create genuine friendships and positive socializations. Of the gamers that were asked for their reasons for gaming, many mentioned the highly interactive and engaging social communities that have developed around gaming.

## Gaming as Therapy

In our current anxiety-filled world, gaming can also provide real benefits in stress relief and promoting positive mental health. Research conducted by the University of Oxford found that players who played video games that they enjoyed, reported feeling happier and more content after playing. Additional studies have also shown that gaming can help players develop better coping strategies for stressful situations, as well as provide an outlet for players to express themselves.

Gaming allows players to delve deep into experiences that would be impossible under normal circumstances. While playing a game, a player can climb a mountain, fly a space ship, defeat a dragon, or run a successful business. As each task or quest is completed, players feel a strong sense of accomplishment and self-mastery which can fuel well-being and positive self-esteem.

## Games That Your Grateful For

As we move towards the final month of the year, do you find yourself grateful for your gaming community and favorite games? Did gaming help you weather the disruptions of 2020, or bring you newfound friends and relationships in 2021? Let us know what games you're most grateful for this year in the comments below!